



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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Division of Water warns leaky pipes drain valuable resource *Small repairs add up to big savings*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 6, 2013) – The week of March 18 is “Fix a Leak Week,” and officials at the Kentucky Division of Water are encouraging residents to repair small water leaks in their homes.

Minor water leaks account for more than 1 trillion gallons of water wasted each year in U.S. homes, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WaterSense program. Water leaks can account for an average of 10,000 gallons of water wasted in the home every year – enough to fill a backyard swimming pool.

The EPA suggests the following steps to check if you have a leak:

- Take a look at your water usage during a colder month, such as January or February. If a family of four exceeds 21,000 gallons per month, there are serious leaks.
- Check your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter changes at all, you probably have a leak.
- Identify toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank. If any color shows up in the bowl after 15 minutes, you have a leak. (Be sure to flush immediately after the experiment to avoid staining the tank or bowl.)
- Examine faucet gaskets and pipe fittings for any water on the outside of the pipe to check for surface leaks.

Follow these tips to help prevent water loss by leaks:

- Regularly check your toilet, faucets and pipes for leaks. If you find a leak, have it fixed as soon as possible.
- Check faucet washers and gaskets for wear and replace them.
- Leaky toilets are most often the result of a worn toilet flapper. Replacing the rubber flapper is a quick fix that could save a home up to 200 gallons of water per day.
- For a leaky garden hose, replace the nylon or rubber hose washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench.
- Tighten connections on your showerheads if drips appear when the shower is off.

- Check your garden and lawn irrigation system for leaks, or hire a certified expert to check it for you.

Other smart water-use tips include taking shorter showers, turning off the faucet while brushing teeth or shaving, running the dishwasher or washing machine only when full and using a timer for the sprinkler system.

The EPA urges homeowners to replace plumbing fixtures with items featuring the WaterSense label. WaterSense-labeled toilets and faucets have been independently tested and certified to save water and perform as well as or better than standard models. Visit

http://www.epa.gov/watersense/about_us/index.html to learn more about the WaterSense program and how you can make every drop count.

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